By the King.

¶ A Proclamation againſt the diſorderly Printing, vttering, and diſperſing of Bookes, Pamphlets, &c.

WHereas the three and twentieth day of Iune, in the eight and twentieth yeere of the Reigne of Our late deare Sister, Queene Elizabeth, for the repreſſing of ſundry intolerable offences, troubles, and diſturbances, as well in the Church, as in the Ciuill Gouernment of the State and Common-Weale, occaſioned by the diſorderly Printing and Selling of Bookes, a Decree was made in the High Court of Starre-chamber, containing many iuſt and prouident Ordinances for preuenting of thoſe inconueniences; And amongſt the reſt, That no perſon or perſons ſhould imprint, or cauſe to be imprinted, any Booke, Worke, or Copy, againſt the forme and meaning of any Reſtraint or Ordinance, contained, or to be contained in any Statute or Lawes of this Realme, or in any Iniunction, made or ſet foorth by her Maieſtie, or her Priuie Councell, or againſt the true intent and meaning of any Letters Patents, Commiſſions, or Prohibitions vnder the Great Seale of ENGLAND, or contrary to any allowed Ordinance, ſet downe for the good Gouernance of the Company of Stationers within the City of London, vpon paine of impriſonment by the ſpace of ſixe Moneths, without Baile or Mainepriſe, and ſuch further punishment as in the ſaid Decree is ſet downe; And that euery perſon that ſhould wittingly ſell, vtter, put to ſale, binde, ſtitch or ſow, or wittingly cauſe to be ſolde, vttered, put to ſale, bound, ſtitched, or ſowed, any Bookes or Copies whatſoeuer, Printed contrary to the intent and true meaning of the Ordinances or Articles aforeſaid, ſhould ſuffer three moneths impriſonment for his or their offence. The true intent and meaning of which ſaid Decree hath beene cauteloufly abuſed and eluded, by Printing in the parts beyond the Sea, and elſewhere, as well ſundry ſeditious, ſchiſmaticall, and ſcandalous Bookes and Pamphlets, as alſo ſuch allowed Bookes, Workes and Writings, as haue beene imprinted within the Realme, by ſuch, to whom the ſole Printing thereof by Letters Patents, or lawfull Ordinance or Authoritie doeth appertaine, according to the true intent of the ſaid Decree, and by importing the ſame into this Our Realme. Wee Willing, not onely to tread in the ſteps of Our ſaid deare Sister, but to adde ſuch further ſtrength as ſhall be meete, to thoſe prouident and good Orders made in Her time, Haue thought fit to publiſh and declare vnto all Our Subiects, That it is Our expreſſe will and Commandement, that the ſaid Decree be from henceforth ſtrictly obſerued, and put in execution.

8714
150
53421

And to meet with the malice and craft of such, as by sleight or cunning shall attempt, or goe about to vndermine, or auoyd all or any part of the sayd Decree, we doe straitly prohibit and forbid, that no person or persons whatsoeuer, either Our naturall borne Subiect, Denizen, or Stranger, doe at any time hereafter, either within Our owne Dominions, or without, imprint, or cause to be imprinted, or bring in, or cause to be brought in, into this Our Realme, or sell, stitch, binde, sell, put to sale, or disperse any seditious, schismaticall, or other scandalous Bookes, or Pamphlets whatsoeuer, or any other booke or bookes (though lawfull or allowed to bee Printed by such to whom the Printing thereof doth belong) which shall be Printed contrary to the true intent of the sayd Decree, or shalbe Printed out of this Realme, of purpose to auoyd the sayd Decree, or any prohibition or restraint conteyned in any Letters Patents, Priuiledge, or lawfull ordinance, vpon paine of Our indignation and heauy displeasure, and of the paines, punishments and imprisonments, conteyned in the sayd Decree, and such further censures, as by Our Court of Star-chamber, and high Commission respectiuely, shall be thought meet to be inflicted on them, for such their offences.

And we doe straitly charge, authorise, and command the Master and Keepers, or Wardens of the Mysterie or Arte of Stationers of the Citie of London, and their Successors and their Deputies, that they from time to time (taking with them such Officers, as in, or by their Charters or the said Decree are appointed) doe make carefull and diligent search for all such scandalous and offensiue Bookes or Pamphlets, as are, or shall be imported into this Realme, or here imprinted, contrary to this Our Royall Commandement, and seize the same, and doe their vttermost indeuours, aswell for suppressing thereof, as for bringing the Offenders vnto Iustice, as they the said Master, Wardens, and their Deputies, and euery of them will answere their neglect at their perils:

Willing, and hereby straitly charging and commanding all and euery Our Iustices of Peace, Mayors, Sheriffes, Bayliffes, Constables, and Headboroughes, and all Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, Wayters, and all other Our Officers, Ministers, and Subiects whatsoeuer, as they tender Our fauour, and will auoyd Our indignation and displeasure, from time to time, to their vttermost powers, to see this Our Royall pleasure duely executed, and to be ayding and assisting to the persons before mentioned in the due execution of this Our commandement.

Giuen at Our Mannour of Hampton Court, the fiue and twentieth day of September, in the one and twentieth yeere of Our Reigne of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland.

God saue the King.

¶ Imprinted at London by Bonham Norton, and Iohn Bill,
Printers to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie.
M.DC.XXIII.

534214

UMI